
CAPITOL CONNECTION

A Weekly Update of News and Views
For Opinion Shapers and Policy Makers

Congressman Gary G. Miller
42nd District, California



March 13, 2009

Congressman Miller Urges Increased Security Along the Southwest Border

As the Mexican military has recently cracked down on drug cartels and corruption, drug cartels are engaging in an increasingly violent conflict among themselves and with the Mexican government for control of trafficking routes along the U.S.-Mexico border. As a result, this violence has claimed the lives of over 7,000 people throughout the past year. This week, Congressman Miller joined several of his colleagues in sending two letters to President Obama to express strong concern regarding the increased violence and instability along the Southwest border. In the first letter, Congressman Miller urges the President to resume Operation Jump Start by deploying members of the National Guard to assist our Border Patrol in securing the Southern border. Throughout the two years of the Operation Jump Start mission, the Guardsmen built 37 miles of fence, repaired 700 miles of roadway, assisted in confiscating 298,000 pounds of drugs, offered support in over 166,000 arrests, and helped in 100 rescues. The second letter requests that the President expeditiously complete the existing border fence construction projects required by law and consider building additional infrastructure wherever needed. Congressman Miller is deeply concerned about this surge in violence and will continue to work with his colleagues to ensure that the Border Patrol and other law enforcement officials are fully equipped to secure the border and protect our communities.

As the Deficit Soars, Administration Proposes Government-Run Health Care

While the federal deficit for Fiscal Year 2009 is already projected to be a whopping \$1.75 trillion, the Administration has proposed a massive expansion of the government's involvement in health care. On top of the \$150 billion included in the Democrat Stimulus Package, the Administration's budget proposal contains nearly \$1 trillion in new health care spending by the federal government, which includes a \$634 billion reserve fund as a "down payment" for expanded coverage. According to an independent analysis, up to 118 million people will lose their private health care coverage and be forced onto the new government-run health insurance program under the Administration's proposal. Congressman Miller opposes government-run and rationed health care, not only because it is severely over-priced, but because it will harm medical innovation and the patient-doctor relationship. Rather, Congressman Miller favors market-based approaches to reduce both the cost of healthcare and the number of uninsured Americans, and has continually supported legislation that increases health research funding, provides modern benefits to Medicare, and expands the number of tax deductions available to those individuals who pay for their own health care.

House Passes Water Quality Investment Act

This week, the House passed a bill to revamp federal programs that provide funding for improvements to water and wastewater infrastructure systems. Specifically, this bill reauthorizes the Clean Water State Revolving Loan Fund, which provides low interest loans to communities to fund new water infrastructure projects and the replacement of aging wastewater infrastructure. In addition, it authorizes \$50 million for an EPA pilot program that funds projects intended to produce water from alternative sources in an environmentally sustainable manner by conserving, managing, reclaiming, treating, or reusing water or wastewater. While Congressman Miller supports efforts to improve water infrastructure, he has concerns that the bill places new mandates that would force loan recipients to pay artificially inflated wages for the construction of water projects. As Congress continues to address the water issues that California faces, he will continue to support smart policies that create innovative sources of water for our drought prone state.

Entries Sought for Artistic Discovery Competition

Congressman Miller would like to remind all high school students residing in the 42nd district that he is currently accepting artwork submissions for the Artistic Discovery 2009 Congressional Art Competition. The Artistic Discovery competition provides aspiring high school artists with the opportunity to have a winning entry displayed at the U.S. Capitol for a full year. Additionally, Southwest Airlines will provide the first place winner with three roundtrip tickets to Washington, D.C. to see their artwork unveiled. For more information on Artistic Discovery 2009, please contact Mina Choi in the Brea office at (714) 257-1142.